

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 233854
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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ACDA-07 EUR-12 USIE-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00
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APPROVED BY NEA:SSOBER
NEA/ARP:JWTTWINAM
EUR/SOV:ABOHLN
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NEA/P:RUNDELAND
ISP/ACDA:DCLINARD

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MANAMA IMMEDIATE
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 233854

FOR AMB FROM SOBER USUNFOR ASST. SECRETARY ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PARM BA US

SUBJECT:INDIAN OCEAN TALKS: POSSIBLE MENTION OF
MIDEASTFORCE

REF: (A) MANAMA 2093, (B) MANAM 1356

, DEPARTMENT SHARES YOUR CONCERN THAT AS A RESULT OF
INDIAN OCEAN TALKS WITH SOVIETS, MIDDLE EAST FORCE NOT BE
PLACED IN ERRONEOUS PUBLIC CONTEXT OF "BASING" IN BAHRAIN,
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PAGE 02 STATE 233854

OR THAT ANY ATTENTION BE DRAWN TO OUR RESIDUAL FACILITIES
ON THE ISLAND.

2. FYI: SOVIETS DID MENTION BAHRAIN, SPECIFICALLY OUR
COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES, IN THE FIRST ROUND OF INDIAN
OCEAN TALKS LAST JUNE, BUT SINCE THEN HAVE NOT ALLUDED TO
BAHRAIN IN NEGOTIATIONS. IN SECOND ROUND, U.S. STATED

THAT ARRANGEMENT UNDER WHICH MIDEASTFORCE WAS HOMEPORTED AT BAHRAIN HAS BEEN TERMINATED; HOWEVER, MIDEASTFORCE SHIPS CONTINUE TO MAKE VISITS TO BAHRAIN FOR CREW REST, SELF-MAINTENANCE, AND REPROVISIONING, THIS INCLUDES RECEIVING SOME SPARE PARTS AND DRY GOODS. END FYI.

3. WE ARE RECOMMENDING TO ATHERTON, NOW SCHEDULED TO MEET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER SEPTEMBER 29, THAT HE MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS IF NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE (REFTEL A) IS RAISED:

A. WE HAVE SEEN ARTICLE. OF COURSE, THE REFERENCE TO "PERMANENT FORCE OF THREE SURFACE VESSELS IN THE AREA, BASED IN THE PERSIAN GULF AT BAHRAIN" IS INACCURATE.

B. FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF NEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR MIDDLE EAST FORCE WITH GOB, WE PROVIDED PRESS WITH MUTUALLY AGREED UPON GUIDANCE. WE WILL CONTINUE TO REITERATE THIS GUIDANCE WHEN APPROPRIATE TO AVOID MISSTATEMENTS.

C. IN CURRENT INDIAN OCEAN TALKS, SOVIETS HAVE NOT TAKEN INITIATIVE TO LINK MIDDLE EAST FORCE TO ANY "BASING" OR EVEN RESIDUAL PRESENCE IN BAHRAIN. WE WILL PROVIDE GOB WITH FUTURE BRIEFINGS ON INDIAN OCEAN TALKS, PARTICULARLY WITH ANY REFERENCE TO BAHRAIN.

4. YOU MAY DRAW ON FOREGOING IF NEEDED FOR ANY IMMEDIATE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 STATE 233854

DISCUSSIONS WITH GOB LEADERS ON THE NY TIMES ARTICLE. IF TIME PERMITS, WE WOULD PREFER, HOWEVER, THAT YOU AWAIT REPORT OF ATHERTON'S MEETINGS WITH FONMIN.

5. PRESS GUIDANCE WE WILL REFER TO IS THAT IN PARA 6, REF B AS FOLLOWS:

QUOTE: AS A RESULT OF RECENT DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF BAHRAIN AND THE UNITED STATES, THE TWO GOVERNMENTS HAVE AGREED TO TERMINATE, EFFECTIVE JUNE 30, 1977, THE ARRANGEMENTS UNDER WHICH THE U.S. MIDDLE EAST FORCE HAS MAINTAINED CERTAIN FACILITIES IN BAHRAIN. THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ANTICIPATE THAT THE U.S. MIDDLE EAST FORCE'S VESSELS WILL VISIT BAHRAIN FROM TIME TO TIME, JUST AS THEY WILL CONTINUE TO VISIT OTHER FRIENDLY REGIONAL PORTS. THE TWO GOVERNMENTS HAVE AGREED THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL RETAIN IN BAHRAIN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SCHOOL AND AN OFFICE TO PROVIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT FOR IT AS WELL AS FOR OCCASIONAL U.S. NAVY VISITS. THESE ARRANGEMENTS REFLECT THE CONTINUING FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE STATE OF BAHRAIN AND THE UNITED STATES. UNQUOTE.
CHRISTOPHER

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Disposition History: n/a
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